Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of electro discharge machining a passage through a work piece using a hollow electro discharge machining electrode and a corresponding flushing agent supplied via the hollow electrode wherein a discrete backing member is positioned abutting a face of the work piece through which the electrode exits so that at break through of said electrode through said work piece the backing member is locally deformed so that the path of the flushing agent is not disrupted, wherein the discrete backing member is positioned to span and abut the entire breakthrough region on the face of the work piece through which the electrode exits.

2. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the backing member is positioned such that it forms a fluid tight seal with the work piece.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the backing member comprises modeling clay.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for electro discharge machining a passage through a work piece comprising a hollow electro discharge machining electrode, a corresponding flushing agent supplied via the hollow electrode and a discrete backing member positioned abutting a face of the work piece through which the electrode exits so that at break through of said electrode through said work piece the path of the flushing agent is not disrupted, wherein the discrete backing member is positioned to span and abut the entire breakthrough region on the face of the work piece through which the electrode exits, and

wherein the backing member is made of a material that locally deforms upon breakthrough of the electrode.

7. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 6 wherein the backing member comprises modeling clay.

8. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein the backing member comprises modeling clay.

9-12. (Canceled)